AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of all claims that are or were in the present application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remains under examination in the application are presented below. The claims are presented in ascending order and each includes one status identifier.

1. – 129. Canceled.

130. (Previously Presented) A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection, comprising adminsitering an effective amount of a purine or pyrimidine β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

131. (Original) The method of claim 130, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

132. (Original) The method of claim 130, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

133. (Original) The method of claim 130, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered in combination or alternation with a second anti-hepatitis C agent.

134. (Original) The method of claim 133, wherein the second agent is selected from the group consisting of an interferon, ribavirin, a protease inhibitor, a thaizolidine derivative, a polymerase inhibitor, and a helicase inhibitor.

135. (Original) The method of claim 134, wherein the second agent is an interferon.

136. (Original) The method of claim 134, wherein the second agent is an ribavirin.

137. (Original) The method of claim 130, wherein the compound is in the form of a dosage unit.

138. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 137, wherein the dosage unit contains 50 to 1000 mg.

139. (Original) The method of claim 137, wherein the dosage unit is a tablet or capsule.

140. (Original) The method of claim 137, wherein the host is a human.

141. (Original) The method of claim 130, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is in substantially pure form.

142. (Original) The method of claim 141, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is at least 90% by weight of the β–D-isomer.

143. (Original) The method of claim 141, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is at least 95% by weight of the β–D-isomer.

144. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 130, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered.

145. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 130, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered in the form of a pharmaceutically acceptable salt.

146. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 130, wherein the β–D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered in the form of a pharmaceutically acceptable ester.

147. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 144, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

148. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 145, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

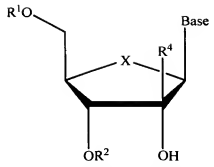
149. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 146, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

150. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 144, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

151. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 145, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

152. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 146, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

153. (New) A compound of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein:

Base is a pyrimidine base;

R^1 and R^2 are each independently H, acyl or phosphate, wherein at least one of R^1 or R^2 is acyl;

R^4 is alkyl; and

X is O.

154. (New) The compound of claim 153 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein R^1 and R^2 are each independently acyl.

155. (New) The compound of claim 154 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein R^4 is methyl.

156. (New) The compound of claim 155 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein R^1 and R^2 are each independently lower acyl.

157. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of claim 153, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

158. (New) A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering a compound of claim 153.

159. (New) A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a hepatitis C virus in the host with a compound of claim 153.

160. (New) A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a cell in the host infected with a hepatitis C virus with a compound of claim 153.